

Our Times In Prophecy, No. 14.

BY JOHN CULP.

The march in intelligence.

Although it is deviating a little from the subject, it is desired to speak here of the terms employed by divine prophecy in illustrating our advancement in intelligence.

The prophecy will, in Rev. 18, as we shall notice hereafter, again enter direct upon the greatest questions and concern of humanity in our day. This it seems to have been the bent of the spirit of prophecy throughout our course. It did not tell us of some wayside issue, and leave the great popular current of sentiments unnoticed, but to the reverse it applied itself to the great popular sentiments upon which revolved all the movements of humanity in the world. And we pride ourselves that we have unwaveringly tried in our course to stay right by this.

Now that we have had some very hard appellations applied in these series of articles, seemingly calling into question and censuring our good deeds and motives, and peaceful times, and besides predicted a judgment; it is necessary and even urgent to show some reason in the manner that things are presented.

The position that is going to be taken now, is that we have been, in the methods employed in the utterances of the prophecies under consideration and in describing the various stages in humanity; described as rising fast in intelligence; and may much rather be regarded respectful than disgraceful. To show this we desire the reader to look for a moment both into the future and the past.

It should not be thought that God is done with us in the march of intelligence, though he should cast down and destroy all the present thrones and systems, by no means. But as sure as such things would come to pass, according to the spirit of prophecy, that sure will a system in intelligence come to pass as far superior, to our time as our present time is superior to ancient times, for this the prophecy is continually telling us of when it speaks of these revolutions. Even so it speaks of it in Rev. 18, where the most doleful judgments are described. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." Verse 20. Rejoice! Why? Because this city which has been run by ignorant and unconverted men and even infidels have caused a check and prohibited the onward march of intelligence. In other words; the great knowledge that has sprung in upon us, never was calculated to be run by a set of unconverted monopolists. God has intended no doubt, the great light in recent knowledge and in inventing machinery, if any good is to accrue from it at all, for his humble creation and not for the exclusive and excessive use and enjoyments of a few monopolist corporations and millionaires.

That benefits are intended for the general good of humanity in the knowledge attained in new discoveries and inventions in labor saving machinery; but little doubt need to be entertained, but to bring this about their necessarily needs a site of filth and rubbish to be removed.

Of course just how the future opens and extends the onward march of intelligence, is to a great extent conjecture with mortality. But having noticed that changes and revolutions have always advanced us in intelligence; let us again survey the past with this thought in our minds, and contrast ourselves with early times, and see where we have intellectually come from. Probably those appellations applied to us in the prophecies will become more respectful.

We have a definite account that the world has stood near 6,000 years but it is now not yet two thousand years since the only name under heaven was given whereby all men might be saved. Previous to this the effort was made through one nation to establish the fear of a God in heaven, and to enlighten man, and to have him to look upward instead of upon the ground as an animal, and begin to place an estimate upon himself, and learn that he is to live hereafter. And then think of the simple and literal methods that had to be resorted to to make this nation and other nations to believe that

there was a God in heaven. Consider for a moment the command of stoning people to death for the violation of the law even in very small matters. The command of utterly destroying whole cities, men, women and innocent infants and even beasts, all in order to establish with them the fear of a God in heaven and the fore-shadowing of the future enlightened dispensations. Miracles as all know in Moses' time availed but little no doubt because of the lack of reasoning powers.

In Moses' time the people wore their shoes and clothes forty years and scarcely wondered at it when reminded of this and other mighty miracles. About fifteen hundred years later a miracle created a mighty stir in the communities of the Jews. This shows how we have emerged from a very crude and ignorant state; hence we should not be alarmed if we have applied unto us the appellation of a beast by the spirit of prophecy when illustrating our own worldly careers. There may be as much if not more chance of improvement on us till the Lord will have accomplished his designs with us in the future as there has been in the past.

The reasoning faculties of that day were easiest appealed to in the accomplishment of some brilliant war exploit; such as Jonathan putting an army to flight; David slaying Goliath. And then their faithfulness had to be displayed in such horrible deeds as Samuel slaying Amalek and Phinehas thrusting a knife through the Israelite and Midianite woman who came into their camp. We refer to these things, not to show how good and virtuous and righteous we are, but to show where the Lord has brought us from.

If these things occurred among the Lord's own chosen people what might we expect from the heathen. Well it would be of no use to begin to illustrate their intellectual powers with a beast for there was not system enough among them to make any comparison in the early times of this world. And even so it seems to be whether this constitutes a reason or not, for we are not having any illustrations of that kind made until Daniel speaks of Babylon comparing it to one of the four beasts, the lion, the most to be dreaded of all animals, the king of the animals of the forest.

The next beast is the devouring bear with flesh in his mouth his nature indicates the idea of consuming all establishments in governments and have but one. This idea, if it may be that intended, is an intelligent one, such ideas are even held in our enlightened times.

The next vision is the beautiful leopard, representing however a departure from the natural creation in animals, having the wings of a fowl and having four heads. Yes, the progress in humanity intellectually is here described. It is honorable for those times to show that four heads could be subject to one body, which was the case for a short space of time in the Grecian empire. This shows enlightenment in the political affairs of that time.

(Concluded next week.)

Epistolary to Lewis C. Stiffler.

WATERLOO, IOWA, MARCH 14, 1887.

My dear brother in the flesh and also in Christ Jesus:—

Jesus is ever with you, and constantly pouring the balm of Gilead into your deep heart-wounds, and binding up your lacerated and riven heart-strings. God did not call dear sister May, your beloved and affectionate bosom companion to the upper and better world, to make us sorrowful or to add to our sufferings, but to increase our faith and confirm our hopes in Him. God is a loving Father, too wise to err or be unkind. Nature and affection causes us to weep over the death of those near and dear to us. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, so it is not in the least strange that we should weep over dear sister's death, so lately called to heaven.

Not only weep, but deeply feel the absence of our loved ones. We cannot say lost, for when the beloved die in the Lord, as dear sister did, we feel they are gained in heaven. The anniversary of your wedding not quite four years ago, will be a day not to be forgotten. You were joined together by God in holy matrimony, and were both happy

in your domestic, and spiritual relations. Never will we forget the happy days, weeks and months you both spent with us after your marriage. Although many miles intervene between us and your western home, where you have lived for nearly two years and a half, we never forgot to entrust you into the care of God who loves His children. But alas! when we least expected it, the hand of affliction came and rested heavily upon your household. When we learned of dear sister's afflictions some months ago from your kind pen, little did we think that it was a sickness unto death, nor until the sad telegram reached us that her spirit had taken its flight, could we feel that she was really gone, nor can we fully realize it yet. No one can feel the severing of loving hearts, only those who experience it. No doubt nine tenths of your own being was sepulchered that day, when dear sister May was placed beneath the silent tomb.

Your short years of wedded life were sweet and congenial with such a loving companion as sister was. She was with you in your ministerial and Sabbath School labor. So heart in heart, and hand in hand you journeyed on in the Master's work. But like your Master, innocent, whose love you declare to sinners, you were falsely accused and heart-aches came to you, it was then the womanly graces of a true wife shone forth, and you felt that only the sympathy of your Lord was sweeter and truer in your hours of trial. We cannot understand why those who profess to love the Lord forgot to read in his word "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Psalm 105: 15. Now that she is gone, you are not left alone. Jesus will fill her place and go on with you through life. We know the vacancy can only be filled by His love, none other. Although dear sister sleeps, yet we are assured that mutual love existed, and that your hearts were closely knit together with the love of Jesus; this gives us much consolation. Her last letter written to our mother, which she intended to finish next day, but her sickness prevented, dated June 20, 1886, as we read it again and again still bears the same loving and happy tone. Your bereavement and that of Edward and Jay, the dear little motherless boys, is a heavy one, and the dark shadows which, since your bereavement, like bounding billows o'er you roll, caused by hearts which seem like adamant, are far more crushing but are only typical of the one's our Savior experienced, and He prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." There is not a sorrow or affliction that the Lord is not able or willing to heal, for He hath said "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalms 147: 3. So dear brother, lean on the strong arm of Jesus, and he will continue to care for you and your loving children. A few more sighs, a few more tears and we shall be at rest, where sickness, sorrow, pain or death are felt and feared no more.

Affectionately your sister in deep sympathy,
EMILY R. STIFLER.

Hollidaysburg, Pa.

Old man's eyes are like old man's memories; they are strongest for things a long way off.

Whether happiness may come or not, one should try and prepare one's self to do without it.

The burden which was thoughtlessly and even ignorantly taken up must be patiently borne.

Failure, after long perseverance is much grander than never having made an effort to succeed in business.

Out of the suffering comes the serious mind, out of the salvation, the grateful heart; out of endurance, fortitude; out of deliverance, faith.

Life is too short for any bitter feeling;

Time is the best avenger, if we wait;

The years speed by, and on their wings bear healing;

We have no room for anything like hate.

This solemn truth the slow mounds seem revealing

That thick and fast about our feet are stealing—

Life is too short.

—Ella Wheeler.